

PROJECT ESSAY

MY MINISTRY WITH YOUTH
IN FIRST CORINTH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH ,
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P R E F A C E

This essay is a self-evaluation of the experiences that I encountered at the First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church. I have judged these experiences in light of the theories and practical techniques that were exposed to me while at the Interdenominational Theological Center.

It is with love and humility that I attempt to objectively describe and criticize the whole experience. And I thank God for the opportunity of having been in this situation.

I shall never forget all of the instructors who have shared patiently and unselfishly their knowledge with me in my endeavor at I T C.

Special thanks and appreciation to Dr. Jonathan Jackson, my faculty advisor.

Gradys Irwin Rogers
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INTRODUCTION

Present day Christians are recognizing more and more the need for an adequate Christian Education Program. This is certainly so when one takes a broad view of the changing trends through which the church is now passing on a world, national, regional, and local level.

Though this be true, many churches at the local level, particularly black Baptist, have been unduly slow in realizing and implementing the necessary kind of Christian Education Program that would be an asset to the particular church and the community at large.

This report serves a twofold purpose. Firstly, it is submitted in partial requirement for the Master of Religious Education (MRE) degree. Secondly, it is presented in an attempt to demonstrate what the writer has done at this church in an attempt to bring about an adequate and effective Christian Education Program.

It seems needless at this time to bring forth all of the particular plans, programs, projects, and activities that were initiated over the four year period (1968-1972). Therefore, the writer will present only those items that were met with a reasonable amount of success. This

report will only deal with the Youth Department and the Young Men Bible Class of the church. This report will present an overview of the First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church; the nature of the church as established in the Bible; the principles and objectives of the Educational Ministry of the church as explained by the Bible and contemporary scholars; and how the writer has tries to apply and/or adapt these findings to the particular situation at the First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church.

This report will also discuss problems that were encountered as the writer proceded to function as teacher and administrator of the Youth Department at this church.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST CORINTH
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

History

The First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church was organized in 1922, under the leadership of the late Rev. W. M. Phillips. The first church site was a small wooden frame house located at the corner of Williams Street and Hunnicutt Place, Atlanta, Georgia. This area was called "Tan Yard Bottom" at that time. In 1934 the church moved to 637 Simpson Street, N. W. Here was a gaint step for the church was growing in membership and this physical plant was more suitable for the members. In 1944, the church suffered a great loss at the death of Rev. Phillips. In 1945 Rev. J. H. Sanders was called as pastor and he served for two years and nine months before he resigned his position. At this time the church was constantly growing in terms of members and spirit. In 1948 the church called the late Rev. W. L. Weems, who served faithfully for nine years. Rev. Weems passed in October of 1957. And in 1958 our present pastor Rev. M. L. Raglin was called. With the church continually increasing in size and spirit, the newly called pastor saw the need to make further advances. After laboring hard for seven years, the church and the pastor once more took another gaint step. On the first

Sunday in December, 1965, the church moved to its present site. ¹

The Present Site

The First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church is located at 2165 Bankhead Avenue, Northwest, Atlanta, Georgia 30318. The church is a large two-unit building. The main unit houses the auditorium and a full basement with twelve classrooms and two assembly rooms.

The education building has two stories of twenty classrooms. There are several rehearsal rooms for the choir and special rooms for small meetings. The church is partially surrounded by two parking lots for the membership and visitors.

First Corinth has a membership of approximately 1,500 persons. The group is a heterogeneous one and breaks down as follows:

Males	_____	40%
Females	_____	60%
Total	_____	100%
Adults (18 years and over)	_____	70%
Non adults (under 18 years)	_____	30%
Total	_____	100%
Married	_____	55%
Unmarried	_____	45%
Total	_____	100%

College Graduates _____	2%
High School Graduates (including 1-3 years of college) _____	35%
Below High School Graduation _____	44%
Elementary Graduates _____	15%
Illiterate _____	4%
Total _____	100%
Active Church enrollment _____	900
Active Sunday School enrollment _____	300

The educational program of First Corinth Baptist Church consisted of five organizations. (1) The Sunday School; (2) The Baptist Training Union; (3) The Teacher's Normal; (4) The Adult Bible Class; and (5) The Vacation Bible School. Of the afore mentioned organizations, the Sunday School is about the most active and productive. The remaining four are poorly operative.

There is very little activity for the young adults (18-25 years) of our church. In fact, the Young Men Bible Class and the Young Women's Class (just recently organized) are the only organizations designed for the young adults.

THE NATURE AND THE EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

The Nature of the Church

When one attempts to discuss the nature of the Church, there are several standpoints from which he may choose to speak. One might speak of the nature of the Church in terms of its theological, sociological, missiological and/or eschatological characteristics succinctly, placing greater emphasis on the theο-sociological and missiological nature of the Church.

Sociological

James M. Gustafson in Treasure in Earthen Vessels, describes the Church as a human, natural, and political community that has language and the faculty for interpretation. He further asserts that the church is a community of memory and understanding; of belief and action. Gustafson states that the Church is an "earthen vessel", and its character as earthen vessle makes it effective. He sees the nature and function of earthen vessels, i.e., pots and pans, in portraying the nature and purpose of the Church as being analogous. "The Church is earthen -- of the stuff of natural and historical life. The Church is a vessel, it is useful. The contact with man and culture is made through

the social and historical media of the Church--its natural functions, political forms, etc." 2

In other words, the Church is a social being that is subject to time and space, at least from a social reference. It is human and has as many characteristics of other human communities such as professions and nations. The Church as a human community is also subject to the scrutiny of various disciplines of learning and interpretation.

The Church may be discussed from the standpoint of its physical appearance such as the building itself, its architectural design; whether or not it has ample parking space and an educational building; a steeple and the like.

David R. Belgum states...."The Church influences and is influenced by social mores, ethnic loyalties and backgrounds, economic systems, political philosophies, and environmental conditions." 3

Theological

According to Belgum, the Greek word "ecclesia" was chosen to describe the nature of the Church in New Testament time. This word was also to preserve the concept of the Chosen people in Ancient Judaism. "Ecclesia" meant literally a group of people "called out" for a meeting or assembly. Scripture holds that God took the initiative in calling together a people who would later create a Church in His name. God's purpose for the Church is that it might serve as an instrument (rather than an object) through which the world might be redeemed and recon-

ciled to Him.

Martin Luther in a discussion on the third Article of the Apostle's Creed states....The origins of this group's existence are from God, and God is also the end of the group, that is, the Church exists to worship God and bring others to worship Him in the "one true faith." ⁴

The Holy Spirit has an important role in the Church. The New Testament Church began on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit moved like a "rushing mighty wind" as the results of the preaching of the Gospel of the Risen Christ. The relationship between Christ and the Church was so close that the Church became thought of as the "Mystical Body of Christ." God interjected Himself into the historical experiences of mankind in the person of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word. Christ remains in fellowship with believers (the Church) through a corporate incarnation, as He said, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." ⁵

While the term "ecclesia" indicates the relation of the Church to the world, the term "koinonia" describes the relationship of the members of the Church toward one another. When one looks at the internal nature of the Church he must focus on the interior life of the believer to discover the significance of his membership in the Church. "The Communion of Saints" is one way of expressing or characterizing this interpersonal relationship between church members.

Eschatological

H. Richard Niebuhr in Christ and Culture states that whereas a culture is concerned with temporal and passing values, Christ has words of eternal life. The recognition of the eschatological nature of the church possibly one of the greatest advances in theology. The Church is a developing church, a church of hope, always imperfect in this world, however, journeying toward its promised perfection in the next. The church is certainly a part of this world. It is both visible and tangible. However, this world is not the definitive home of the Church. The Church is awaiting its completion elsewhere.

Peter J. Hebblethwaite feels that what I John says about Christian life fits the Church too: "Beloved, we are God's children now, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2).

Missiological

Elton Trueblood in his book The Validity of the Christian Mission, says that..."The Church of Jesus Christ does not have missions; in its very life it is Mission."⁶ This is a theological development of the recent past, that is shared equally by Protestants and Roman Catholics. Luke records Jesus as saying...."I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!" (Luke 12:49). Emil Brunner, paraphrasing Luke, says...."The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning." In other words there can be no fire without burning and no

Church without mission. The Church which is satisfied to hug its treasures to itself is no longer genuine. The church must become an Incendiary Fellowship.

Essentially, the Church is a mediating community. It does not exist for its own sake or for self-perpetuation. It stands under the Gospel which "judges and saves". It exists for the Lord and for mankind. It exists to manifest to mankind the grace of God. The Church exists to relate, to refer, to signify and to point to God.

In recent years there has been a shift of emphasis from the uniqueness of the Church as an institution to God's purpose through the Church. Thus, the Church becomes an instrument rather than an object. Again, David Belgum expresses the unique mission of the church as the worship of God and the proclamation of the Gospel. He views worship as being the central mission of the church, and the church must pursue this holy task from as many vantage points and through as many channels as possible; liturgical and spontaneous, corporate and individual.

In other words, in order to more effectively fulfill the mission of the church, the nature of the church as social institution that is related to the Kingdom of God, to the culture in which the church finds itself, and to the needs of its members and community, must be studied. The church must direct the hearts of people to God through worship, fellowship, service, witnessing, teaching and preaching the Word of God.

The church is made up of people, not bricks. The church is the

community of saints; and all the buildings, mimeograph machines, schedules and appointment books, pledge cards and envelopes, are important only as they contribute to or make more possible the salvation of individual persons. If this is true, Belgum says, worship does not cease with the organ prelude on Sunday morning at 12:00 and begin with the choir processional the following Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

We must worship God continually, as according to the Scriptures, "pray without ceasing." This we must do if we would break down the walls of separation between "secular" and "sacred" spheres of life. God and His worship are not confined to the Sabbath nor the Temple. The Church must be relevant to the community, sensitive to the needs of the people and foster worship and spiritual life between Sundays as well as on Sunday; and the same must be done in the home, on the job, in the streets as well as the sanctuary.

The Church's Educational Ministry

The Church's Ministry

According to Roger L. Shinn, the Christian Church has only one Ministry. This Ministry is described in the New Testament as the "ministry of reconciliation." However, Shinn goes further to describe this ministry as having many facets. A ministry that includes telling (preaching) of the gospel to mankind, the cultivation of worship, deeds of mercy and works of love, efforts to live in brotherhood as Christians in God's

Kingdom and in the world, the education of the members and the community to the meaning of God's activity in the world.

All of these facets are integral parts of the whole ministry and cannot in reality be separated. However, education has always been a vital part of the church's entire Ministry. It is the undergirding factor of the church's ministry.

The Church's Educational Ministry: What it is

The Church's Educational Ministry is the objectives, procedures and materials used in Christian education by the church in order to carry out its total ministry. It is concerned with formulating the scope, content and context of the educational endeavor. "Christian education is that ministry of the church which provides the educational undergirding for the church's entire ministry of worship, witness, and work." ⁷ "Christian education is the common duty of both the laity and the clergy to educate its constituency to be the church, and to educate it to mission. Education takes place in the community, and the sharing of faith is also the communication of belief. The church's teaching involves factual knowledge, interpretation and incorporation of attitudes into the lives of the learners." ⁸

Objectives of Christian Education

"The objective for Christian education is that all persons be aware of God through his self-disclosure, especially his redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, and that they respond in faith and love --

to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, grow as sons of God rooted in the Christian community, live in the Spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world, and abide in the Christian hope." 9

R. C. Miller says that an objective is the point to which an army is advancing. It, he says, is synonymous with goal or end. He further asserts that objectives serve as (1) a guide to all writers and editors of curriculum materials, for it provides an overarching goal. (2) As a teacher works out specific goals of a unit, the aim for a particular lesson, or the long range plan for the year, the objective provides the orientation needed so that the myriad of particular educational activities may point toward adequate outcome. (3) An objective provides a basis for evaluation.

The Purpose and Objectives as formulated in 1958:

The supreme purpose of Christian education is to enable persons to become aware of the seeking love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and to respond in faith to this love in ways that will help them grow as children of God, live in accordance with the will of God, and sustain a vital relationship to the Christian community.

To achieve this purpose Christian education, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, endeavors:

To assist persons, at each stage of development, to realize the highest potentialities of the self as divinely created, to commit themselves to Christ, and to grow toward maturity as Christian persons;

To help persons establish and maintain Christian relationships with their families, their churches, and with other individuals and groups, taking responsible roles in society, and seeing in every human being an object of the love of God;

To aid persons in gaining a better understanding and awareness of the natural world as God's creation and accepting the responsibility for conserving its values and using them in the service of God and of mankind;

To lead persons to an increasing understanding and appreciation of the Bible, whereby they may hear and obey the word of God; to help them appreciate and use effectively other elements in the historic Christian heritage;

To enable persons to discover and fulfill responsible roles in the Christian fellowship through faithful participation in the local and world mission of the church." 10

Methodology of Christian Education

Christian education has a reformulatory nature in that it must constantly be revised to meet the needs of the people and the community that it is to serve. Again, Roger Shinn defines Christianity as being the faith of a community living in history and the life of a community of people responding to God's deed in Christ and to God's continuing activity in the world. Thus, we determine the nature of Christian education. Christian education brings to the new knowledge and methodology of Modern Psychology of Education its own purpose and sensitivities; it appropriates, evaluates, and appreciates experience and information in the light of its own faith.

In other words the Christian educator makes use of all of the modern methods, procedures, techniques and materials of the Public School System, in order to better serve its purpose of creating opportunities for persons to change their attitudes from selfishness and apathy to those attitudes of sharing in Christian faith and mission.

Because Christianity is the life of a community, its educational ministry is the work of that community. Christian education is ceaseless introduction and God is the educator. There is always the sense of "becoming" a Christian. We must grow in grace. The method of Christian educators is one of repeated introduction to the life and mission of the Christian community. It uses all of the resources of the community that might be of service to attain this goal.

Because modern psychology of learning teaches that the fullest possible involvement of the whole personality is necessary to achieve the maximum results in education, we believe that an idea or concept or belief will be more firmly imbedded in the memory and will more likely influence the behavior if it has been reinforced by emotional overtones and appropriate action.

Rituals may be used to serve this end. They may weave together speech, gesture and rhythm, unite physical, mental and emotional being into a single response to the Unseen. The use of symbols and images may also serve this purpose.

The liturgy allows for full participation of the whole person through

all of the five senses. Belgum lists the following:

"Sight - stained glass windows, behavior of the pastor and members;

Hearing - Message, hymnody, responsive reading;

Taste - the bread and wine;

Touch - kneeling, shaking hands;

Smell - incense, aroma of the wine." ¹¹

It is important that we respond to God's grace with our whole being, mind, feeling and action. It should be remembered that both Liturgical and Christian (as is all) education is a two-way process, and therefore whatever methodology used, it must be in an atmosphere of mutual respect, love and responsibility.

Christian Education and The Black Experience

The first source of education for black people in America was the black church. Though the primary objective of this effort was for training in morals, the black church taught its members to read, to write and Mathematics. The first endeavor of the black church to educate its people came into being as the Sunday School.

"The Sabbath School (Sunday School) for blacks was started in 1787 in Philadelphia and in 1796 in New York by the AME and AMEZ churches. These schools provided the only available opportunity for learning by black students....The Black Sunday School was made a necessary part of the work of the church." ¹²

Somewhere along the way when the states began to play an active part in the public education of its citizens, the church (particularly the black church) became less and less responsive to the educational needs of its members.

"Today education is a problem among Blacks in public school and in church school....The Christian Church has historically been evangelical, emphasizing "a religion of the heart." Sometimes it is thought that if you have "A religion of the heart" you do not have to use one's intellect because one moves on the basis of feeling." ¹³

I contend that both emotion and intellect are integral parts of the process of education and that they must be kept in proper balance. An effective Christian education program must employ all of the elements that go to make up our human environment. Man learns with his whole being and he reacts likewise.

N. E. Douglas speaks of the Christian education program as one that must prepare itself to meet "change" ¹⁴ He asserts that change can have strange effects on people. It can radicalize and energize some while it conventionalize and paralyze others. He haods that the effect that change will take is dependent upon one's attitude toward change. Change, he states, is not brought about by men, but by time. Therefore, he concludes, change is inevitable and man can make change work for him if his approach to it is positive and his attitude is radical, energetic and progressive.

Douglas goes on to say that some changes are thrust upon us. Like those of the progressive society in which we live. Such changes represented by the "new morality", liberalization of religious taboos, the sex explosion, and the liberation drives of women must be met by the black church. The changes brought about by automation and scientific advances, technological revolution, black awareness, and Black Theology, all must be reckoned with by the Black Church. A Christian education program must be designed to cope with these changes. "Christian education is not something separate from our culture, and it is not taught in a vacuum." ¹⁵ All persons who participate in the learning-teaching process of Christian education are effected by these changes and must develop positive attitudes toward them if the black church is to remain relevant and productive in the community and the world.

According to Douglas, black Baptist Christian educators are "change agents" and they must ask themselves the following questions:

"Is our program of Christian education working? If not, then why not?

Are there other ways that it may work or succeed? If there are ways, why should they be chosen?

How should we go about making the desired change?" ¹⁶

O. P. Stokes contends that there are still three other questions that the pastors, superintendents, lay teachers, and members of the Board of Education in the black church must ask today.

(1) Why do we have an educational program in the church?

- (2) What are we trying, as Christian believers and educators, to accomplish through the church Sunday School, through educational programs in the church, like Sunday Ethnic School, the after school center, and the educational activities through the week?
- (3) How are we going to help persons relate their Christian beliefs to daily life? " ¹⁷

Stokes further suggests that "the basic goal of Christian education in the black church is liberation and empowerment through Scripture and educational skills." ¹⁸

She feels that in our present day situation the black church through its educational ministry should:

Be seen in relationship to the total public educational situation

Help the student, child, youth, and adult, to evaluate and supplement his public school learnings

Utilize its chance to be flexible and innovative, and to make rapid changes in its content and methods

Take advantage of the challenge to help public education become freely creative as the church itself discovers its own unique and serious problems and designs for them." ¹⁹

MY ROLE AS TEACHER

Some Characteristics of the Christian Teacher

The Christian teacher in many instances is similar to a group leader or a discussion leader. Below is a list of six requirements of the leader, who should be able to:

Formulate plans and policies in keeping with the objectives and purposes of the group, bearing in mind the needs of group members;

Analyze, organize, motivate, and help the group members to carry out decisions and to implement their plans;

Provide information and guidance and facilitate communication in the group;

Create social climate to "free" members to express differing opinions, and maintain group morale and cohesion;

Keep individual purposes, needs, and activities in harmony with the purposes and goals of the group;

Adhere to a set of principles which are applicable to all, regarding expressions of approval and disapproval, agreement and disagreement. ²⁰

Some Basic Qualification of the Christian Teacher

Though the Christian teacher is in many situation a discussion leader, there are other times when he or she has to shoulder the entire

burden of trying to keep the teaching-learning process flowing. There are times when this can be disheartening and the Christian teacher must possess the following attributes if he is to persevere.

The Christian teacher must realize that the student is the most important factor in the classroom situation. Not even the subject matter is as important as the student.

The Christian teacher must instill in the students a healthy concept about himself, a "positive, good feeling".

The Christian places the student first and realizes that the teaching-learning process is a two-way process.

Reuel Howe suggests that there are five essential characteristics of the Christian teacher. He states:

He seeks to incarnate the Holy Spirit rather than teach certain subject matter. He is sensitive to the meanings which the pupil brings and the relationship between himself and the pupil.

He seeks to recognize the freedom of the learner to be himself and to stand beside him in his search for the realitiew of Christian faith.

He is willing to wait and to trust the Holy Spirit as the pupil works at his own speed, with only occasional attention along the way.

He is not anxious about the methods he will use; he has many methods at his command and he adapts them as the situation develops.

He believes that as revelation is always personal, so also ther is a person-to-person (I-Thou) relationship in which communication can take place and revelation can occur. ²¹

The Christian teacher must create "healthy perceptions" and a "positive atmosphere". He must believe in the potential of the student. We must remember that Christian teaching and Christian leadership are very closely related. And that both are functions of the interaction of persons. A person cannot display leadership or teaching behavior alone. There must be others who are effected by his actions.

Riggins R. Earl, Jr., "A Mandate For Exploration" asserts that the one who teaches must have a knowledge of history and a knowledge of the social context of the subject matter.

Along with a knowledge of the history and culture of the subject matter, the Christian teacher need to be familiar with modern theories of learning and the theories of personality development. I shall not go into depth of discussion of the learning theories and personality theories in this paper, however, I cannot afford to overlook the importance of the learning tasks to the Christian teacher.

Learning Tasks

"Phases of the human change in which the learner is engaged, are called learning tasks. These phases have been cast in light of the gospel and are undertaken within the Christian community. This concept underlies the five general learning tasks. They are;

Listening with growing alertness to the gospel
and responding in faith and love

Exploring the whole field of relationships in
light of the gospel

Discovering meaning and value in the field
of relationships in light of the gospel

Appropriating personally the meaning and
value discovered in the field of relationships
in light of the gospel

Assuming personal and social responsibility
in light of the gospel

These tasks describe a single process and are not regarded as sequential." 22

My Personal Endeavor

I have tried to apply the foregoing principles to the particular situation at First Corinth Baptist Church. Furthermore, I have endeavored to meet the suggested qualifications for becoming a successful Christian Education Teacher.

My specific area of concentration has been mainly with three organizations of the church. Namely, The Young People's Choir, The Youth Department, and The Young Men's Bible Class.

The Young People's Choir consists of youth whose ages range from 12 to the 20s. They meet weekly on Tuesday nights at 7:30 P.M. In this organization the youth are taught to sing. The songs are of a variety i.e., Gospels, Hymns, Spirituals and Anthems, etc. They are chosen on the basis of their message, relevance, power to influence the Christian community, and their import to the worship service. Even though learning to sing is our primary objective in this organization, the youth are given an opportunity for Christian fellowship, self-realization, and the exercise and

understanding of governmental procedures. Each meeting is designed as an educational experience. The Young People's Choir is a sub-organization within the Youth Department.

The Youth Department of the church is an organization that is designed for the youth of the church as a means wherein the young people can take an active part in the church's activities. I do not intend to suggest that the youth are not an active membership in the church, but the Youth Department exists as one channel through which they can work. The organization meets bi-weekly and has its own slate of officers.

The Young Men's Bible Class (18-20s) meets each Sunday morning as a part of the regular Sunday School. However, it is another sub-organization of the Youth Department. Aside from the regular Sunday School lessons and class participation, this group has a weekday program that coincides with the program of the Youth Department. The Young Men's Bible Class is actually in the Young Adult Department, but since our Young Adult Department is not very active at this time, the Young Men's Bible Class participates with the Youth Department. The following is a sample of the Lesson Plans of the Young Men's Bible Class and a Calendar of Events for the Youth Department.

LESSON PLAN
(For December 21, 1969)

Young Men's Bible Class 18-25

First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church

- I. SUBJECT: "God With Us"
- II. OBJECTIVES: To recognize God's redemptive action in Jesus Christ. To be aware of God's love for man through His son Jesus Christ.
- III. ACTIVITIES:
 - 9:45 Prayer
 - 9:47 Short Talk A general recapitulatory statement about last Sunday's lesson, and an introductory statement about the lesson for today.
 - 9:51 Discussion of the lesson for today "God With Us"
 - Exposition
 - I. The Geneology of Jesus (Matt. 1:1)
 - II. The Birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:18)
 - III. Joseph was a Just Man (Matt. 1:19)
 - IV. Born For A Purpose
 - 10:06 The Lesson in Life Today We should remember to be thankful for Mary and Joseph in the birth of Jesus. The Channels through which we receive our blessings are worthy of our thanks. The role of Mary and Joseph ought to remind us that we too have a vital role to play in the plan of redemption. What is it?
 - 10:21 Collection.... Welcome new members and visitors.
 - 10:30 Reassemble in the larger group for highlights and dismissal.
- IV. MATERIALS: Baptist Quarterly, Bible, and Tape Recorder.

EVALUATION OF THE LESSON PRESENTED
(On December 21, 1969)

Young Men's Bible Class 18-25

First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church

- I. SUBJECT: "God With Us"
- II. ATTENDANCE: Present...9 Absent...4 Visitors...0 Total..13
- III. CLASS PARTICIPATION: 100%
- IV. CLASS RESPONSE: Good
- V. ANECDOTAL OBSERVATION: The participation and response of class was good today. One of the members of the class dropped from the roll, but another one joined the same day. The interest is still high concerning getting the banner for attendance and finance.

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YOUTH DEPARTMENT
(A Tentative Program)

- I. Weekly Meetings on Thursday nights at 7:00 P.M.
- II. The group will participate in at least one "recreational activity" away from the church per month.
- III. Will have at least one "rap session" per month. Discussion on current problems (local and otherwise), book reviews, etc.
- IV. At least one program of a worshipful nature; such as candlelight service, retreat, prayer meeting, etc.
- V. Saturday activities for the sports teams (basketball team, little league baseball team, and swim team).
- VI. Field trips to the opera, movies, baseball games, etc.
- VII. Monthly or bi-monthly movies at the church.
- VIII. Use of resource persons to visit with us.
- IX. Present an Easter Pageant completely authored, produced and directed by the young people of the church.
- X. Christian Service (helping the poor, aged, needy, and fostering love and friendship to unknown persons).

MY ROLE IN ADMINISTRATION

What it is

"Administration is that service which provides for relating persons and groups to one another and to their available resources in such a way that the church's aim in its educational ministry may be achieved." ²³ It determines the framework and structure to be established to relate persons and groups effectively for carrying out the educational ministry.

Basic Principles

The administration is responsible for the development of leaders.

Purpose - The framework must satisfy the task to be done.

Authority and Responsibility - the two must be exercised together.

Participation - all involved or effected should be given consideration in the decision-making process.

Unity - must exist in all policies, structures and procedures.

Coordination - of responsible groups and individuals is necessary to harmonious and productive work.

Consistency - administration must be performed in a manner consistent with the basic tenets of the Christian faith. ²⁴

My Endeavor

My activities in administration at First Corinth Baptist Church were somewhat modified if not stifled. I was not given any real opportunity to exert any of the principles and knowledge (techniques) that I had acquired. In other words, I was not given a chance to put into practice any of the theory governing administration. The situation was paradoxical. We were told to go ahead and do whatever we found necessary to be done in the Youth Department. However, none of the plans, suggestions or recommendations were accepted by the authorities.

In light of this situation, I proceeded to learn from the viewpoint of negation. That is, I observed what not to do as an administrator. Below is a "proposed" Long Range Plan for young adults.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

This program is designed to provide an opportunity to help the Young Adult members of our church realize a wholesome educational adventure and to use leisure time wisely in meaningful Christian experiences. It is also designed to supplement the regular worship service, providing an opportunity for members who have special leadership abilities to perform.

Organizations

All of the following organizations can be held at any designated time. However, the time should be decided upon by the entire group involved eliminating inconveniences. Here is a suggested program:

1. Young Adult Choir
2. Instrumental Ensemble
3. Dramatic Club
4. Health and First Aid Organization
5. Hobby Club
6. Worship Service Committee
7. Christian Home Providers
8. Art Club

9. Creative Dance Troupe
10. Vocal Ensemble
11. Debate Team
12. Church Journal Committee
13. Physical and Recreational Teams

Young Adult Choir

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Developing a broader understanding, interest, and appreciation of church music
2. Understanding the natural, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of music
3. Utilizing and further developing his talent and ability through Christian service
4. Providing music for worship
5. Building a better church-community relationship.

The activities are singing for enjoyment, rehearsing for worship services and special programs; presenting programs and serenades throughout the community.

Instrumental Ensemble

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Making church music an integral part of his life
2. Extending his musical talent into the realm of Christian service
3. Building a foundation for the enjoyment of music as an amateur

4. Developing a broader understanding, interest, appreciation of church music.

The Activities are playing songs for enjoyment and skill developing techniques in playing instruments; playing solos, duets, quartets, etc.

Dramatic Club

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Improving speech habits
2. Utilizing whatever talent and interest he has in this area.

The activities are performing one-act plays that bear relevance to the Christian community. The club will present a dramatic worship service at one of the main Christian holiday observances. Study make-ups, acting techniques, props, and settings.

Health and First Aid Organization

This organization is devised to meet the needs of all members. Each member is given the opportunity to learn to live in a healthy, useful, and happy living condition.

Specific Goals are to help the Young Adult to:

1. Learn how to act and react in an emergency
2. Learn to apply simple first aid and rescue techniques
3. Be mindful of hazards and danger areas in and around the community in order to prevent accidents.

The activities are practicing and studying correct method for handling a sick person (stroke, fainting, cuts, bruises, burns, etc.).

Hobby Club

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Using leisure time wisely in wholesome creative Christian endeavor
2. Exploring new areas of interest for gain or personal satisfaction.

The activities are working with instruments (cameras, radios, wooden objects, etc.) and in fields of interests (ceramics, flowers, foods, etc.).

Worship Service Committee

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Understanding and utilizing the art of worship
2. Preparing meaningful and heart-warming worship services
3. Making and keeping the worship service relevant with the changing trends about the Christian community.

The activities are planning and making the worship service; organizing and printing the worship program; securing dynamic speakers for the worship service; and preparing the chapel or sanctuary with a conducive atmosphere for worship.

Christian Home Providers

This group is for the member who will soon be married; just married recently; or interested in improving home conditions.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Beginning a Christian home

2. Developing a love and appreciation for children
3. Attempting to understand the behavior of young children
4. Understanding one's responsibility when caring for children
5. Some understanding of how to make simple garments; how to plan, prepare, and serve a simple meal
6. Developing an increasing desire and ability to make his home liveable, attractive and convenient
7. Placing Christian principles first in his home
8. Developing some skill in the use of social graces.

The activities are preparing for fashion shows, banquets, teas, luncheons, and special holiday events. They will be the host and hostesses for the church on special events and dinners. They will be responsible for all receptions and weddings held at the church.

Art Club

The Art Club is composed of Young Adults who have some particular interest and ability in drawing and painting.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Exploring the historical background of art
2. Discovering art's rightful place in the Christian religion
3. Finding himself in art in the realm of Christian endeavor
4. Exerting and utilizing his creative talent

5. Discerning the place of aesthetic ability in religion.

The activities are painting and drawing (still life, landscaping, abstractions, etc.). Preparing sets for the dramatic club; decorating the church for special events; and keeping the bulletin boards furnished with current and relevant and reverant materials.

Creative Dance Troupe

This group is composed of Young Adults who have had some training in dance and/or beginners. They are interested in dance and have some ability to perform. They should be required to take a physical examination before enrolling.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Self expression through body movements
2. Creative endeavors through body movements
3. Worshipping and praising God through body expressions
4. Maintaining a healthy mind and body through service.

The activities are preparing a program for the worship hour; exercising the body to keep it in good physical condition; preparing for and visiting community projects to demonstrate the sacredness of dance.

Vocal Ensemble

This group is for the singer sho has special musical ability. He has some training in sight-singing and vocal control. He will be accepted if he does not have the training but have the alertness, and eagerness to

learn.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Further developing an appreciation and interest in a variety of church music
2. Exercising his musical talent
3. Developing correct principles of singing and voice technique
4. Elevating and extending the appreciation for a variety of vocal music (sacred, folk, classical, popular, etc.)
5. Building a better church-community relationship.

The activities are singing for enjoyment; rehearsing for special programs; performing solos, duets, trios, quartets, etc., and participating in the worship services.

Debate Team

This group is for those Young Adults who are interested in public speaking, logical thinking, and dramatic endeavors. No specific requirements are necessary.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Exploring and discovering the Bible
2. Keeping abreast with current problems and issues
3. Becoming a spokesman for Christianity
4. Providing another avenue for wise use of leisure time.

The activities are presenting debates on current and controversial issues. Other activities are presenting issues of great concern to

the church, Christian community, and the society at large.

Church Journal Committee

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in:

1. Keeping the membership informed of current events
2. Utilizing his ability to write and compose articles
3. Providing and maintaining interesting reading materials for the Christian community.

The activities are writing a news bulletin periodically; preparing the printed programs for the worship and other gatherings. Another activity is editing and revising the church calendar and the church handbook.

Physical and Recreational Teams

For those Young Adults with special interest and ability in the area of sports. A training program for beginners and the membership at large.

Specific Goals are to assist the Young Adult in;

1. Keeping physically fit
2. Keeping mentally fit
3. Developing and maintaining good sportmanship
4. Providing wholesome recreation for the church and the community.

The activities are playing basketball, baseball, football, tennis, ping pong, pool, checkers, horse shoe, etc. Intermural and intramural games are encouraged.

CONCLUSION

I have encountered many experiences while serving at First Corinth Missionary Baptist Church. Some were pleasant and some were unpleasant, but they all are now looked upon as invaluable in helping me to become the kind of person that is needed in the area of Christian education.

I now know the value of tolerance and patience when they are needed. Likewise, I have learned how to be kind and understanding, and at the same time how to be firm and consistent.

The strong points in the situation at this church are___(1) There is a wealth of human potential; (2) there is ample space and physical facility; (3) the members appear to be genuinely concerned and enthusiastic about meaningful endeavors (programs, activities, etc.); (4) the church has tremendous financial resource.

The weak points in the situation at this church are___(1) the personnel at the administrative level is not cognizant of many of the contemporary progressive ideas, techniques, objectives, methods, materials and procedures that may be employed to better fulfill the mission of the church. Either this, or they are just apathetic toward the situation, coupled with a case of misplaced priorities. (2) Much of the or-

ganizational structure of the educational program is superficial and defunct.

One might ask as a result of reading the above mentioned weak points....What in fact did I do by way of helping the church? To this question, I would answer...."I did the best that I could, And I believe that the situation is a little better than it was when I first started a few years ago.

Projections into The Future

Unless some radical, energetic and progressive changes are made, First Corinth will continue to loose her youth members; but with a greater pace than they now leave. As other churches in the community re-evaluate and reformulate their education programs to meet the needs of modern man, Corinth Church will slowly become stagnant and as useless as the Dead Sea.

In order that it might be a viable and useful church in the future years, I would recommend that:

The church would immediately and diligently reconsider its mission in the community and in the world

The officers, administrators and the membership as a whole would launch a self-evaluation of the effectiveness of their present program of education

The church will consider the need to employ qualified personnel in order to obtain a meaningful and workable program of Christian education

The church will strive toward higher goals and not be satisfied with idly amusing herself with the few she has obtained.

FOOTNOTES

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